many years ago a portion of a monastery was repaired by the funds given by a wealthy man in gratitude for a dream in which Kuan-yin warned him not to take a river steamer on which he was planning to embark and which sank with a heavy loss of life. Such blessings as sons and recovery from illness are prayed for. Another source of its hold is the determining influence which can be exerted through Buddhism upon the soul's lot after death. The reincarnations and, especially, the heavens and hells in which popular Chinese Buddhism believes have been made graphic to the multitude through literature, pictures, sculpture, and ceremonies, and have found their way into folklore.

The incentive to the conduct which Buddhism lauds is largely found in the effects of good and bad deeds upon one's state in a future existence. The acquisition of merit which may later be effective is one of the strong inducements to the founding and maintenance of the many charitable organizations so characteristic of Chinese life—for supporting nurseries, building bridges, repairing roads, giving medicine to or providing coffins for the poor, and the like.

Assurance of a happy state in the life beyond the grave is obtained by repeating prayers and observing vegetarianism. Certificates—passports to heaven—may be purchased from Buddhist clergy by those who have performed these acts of devotion. Souls of the dead may be assisted by the living. Thus services believed to be efficacious in hastening the delivery of the dead from torment are conducted by the monks on payment of a fee. One of the most picturesque of Chinese festivals, that of care for departed spirits, has an especially Buddhist flavor. It may well be of pre-Buddhist origin, and if so is another instance of

the manner in which Buddhism has identified itself with native customs. The belief is that once a year, in the summer, on the first day of the seventh month, souls are released from the Buddhist hells or purgatories and come back to earth. In private homes food and paper money are provided and incense and candles burned Tor them and public ceremonies on their behalf are conducted by the monks. The festival culminates fifteen days after its beginning, when the spirits are supposed to return to whatever abode may now be appropriate for them.

Many homes have a shrine or shrines to Buddhist divinities.